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ABSTRACT

This study investigated whether a Professional Development Practicum (PDP) at Pennsylvania's Millersville University had an impact on the educational values of PDP student teachers, especially those related to middle level school reform. Researchers designed a 2-semester study to assess changes in educational values of student teachers placed in middle level teamed instruction, as compared to student teachers randomly assigned to non-teamed classrooms. Student teachers completed a survey at the beginning and end of the 14-week student teaching semester. Cooperating teachers also completed the instrument at the beginning of the semester. The VAL-ED instrument assessed educational values regarding relationships in school settings among students, teachers, administrators, and communities. Data analysis indicated that the program had no significant impact on the educational values of PDP student teachers when compared to the values of non-PDP student teachers. Values regarding student, teacher, administrator, and community behaviors and interactions differed among groups, but not significantly. The effect of cooperating teachers' educational values on student teachers' values was minimal. (Contains 2 charts and 22 references.) (SM)

PREPARING REFORM-**MINDED** MIDDLE LEVEL TEACHERS:

Are We Succeeding?

A paper presented at the annual meeting of the
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Introduction:

Since 1989 Millersville University's Department of Educational Foundations has been working to restructure the preparation program for secondary certification students. Departmental planning and implementation have extended from the student's first academic experience in the secondary program to the capstone of the preservice teacher's development, the student teaching experience. As part of our efforts, we have participated as a Project 30 university, member of the Renaissance Group, and as a SSHE Re:Learning university and have been most strongly influenced by the research of John Goodlad, Lee Shulman, Linda Darling-Hammond, Theodore Sizer, and their colleagues.

One of the major results of this restructuring has been the development of a middle level student teaching concentration named the **Professional Development Practicum (PDP)**. Planned jointly by university and school faculties, PDP was initiated in Spring 1994. Through the PDP, teams of student teachers have worked with teams of teachers in middle schools in seven school districts. The three major emphases of the PDP are 1) the characteristics of the middle level learner and school, 2) teaming, and 3) interdisciplinary curriculum.

Research Foundation:

In the wake of the major reform report on public schools, A Nation At Risk, national attention turned to the preparation of teachers in 1986, when

recommendations for teacher education were released in A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century. In response to these recommendations and other reform reports on education, teacher education research has focused upon the knowledge base of teaching, the professionalization of teaching, and the preparation of teachers.

A "new educational institution," called the **professional development** school was described in the 1990 Holmes group report, Tomorrow's Schools, as a means of improving the quality of teachers entering the profession, renewing teachers already in the profession, and linking university research efforts with the practices in schools (Goodlad, 1990).

Collaboration among all participants in the professional development school--teachers, university faculty, teacher education students, and administrators--allows for the immediate application of research findings. Prospective teachers who have learned to analyze the effects of their instruction and who understand the importance of relying on tested and proven instructional strategies will be less likely to adopt the traditional approach to teaching learned through observation during their years as students in elementary and secondary classrooms (Breenan & Simpson, 1993).

Rationale for Professional Development Practicum:

Millersville University is a state university which prepares over 500 elementary, secondary, and special education teachers each year. As a regional university, we cooperate with school districts in Lancaster, York, Dauphin, Lebanon, and Chester counties to provide student teaching placements. Our restructured program allows

for the number and diversity of the districts in this cooperative effort.

The 12 credit hour semester of student teaching is the capstone of the MU teacher preparation program. In research surveys, graduates from teacher preparation institutions consistently ranked this semester as the most important and meaningful of the entire program.

Research has also indicated that the practices and philosophy of the cooperating teacher strongly influence the success of this experience and the development of the student teacher. The student teaching experience is where the connections between theory and practice are made or broken. The practices of the cooperating teacher strongly influence the novice teacher's attitudes about innovative or traditional classroom practices.

We at MU recognize that student teaching experience is the preservice teacher's "exhibition" of those outcomes we know are most important for the future quality of the teachers we want in our schools (Sizer, 1993).

As a regional university preparing over 200 secondary student teachers yearly, we have designed the professional development practicum as a laboratory for the development of

1. teachers who will be able to connect theory and practice in their student teaching experience.
2. teachers who will be knowledgeable in the implementation of research and reform practices in secondary schools.
3. teachers who will be able to reflect upon their own practices in the

classroom.

4. teachers who will be able to work in teams of professionals.

5. teachers who will develop into leaders within their schools in those practices which have been found to encourage meaningful learning, responsible decision making, personalized environments, and equitable schools.

To do this, we believe

1. the role of the supervisor should be strengthened to support both the student teacher and the cooperating teacher in this process. The supervisor becomes a member of the team of student teachers and cooperating teachers.

2. in order to prepare teachers who are able and knowledgeable team members in restructured schools and middle schools, student teachers should work within a team of student teachers and also with a team of cooperating teachers.

3. ongoing instruction in professional knowledge and "situated methods" **which are directly related to what the student teacher is experiencing and teaching in his/her assignment** should be provided by the supervisor and site-based teachers and principals. This includes opportunities for reflective practice directly related to the student teaching experience. Instructional planning includes the development and instruction of a team-planned interdisciplinary unit by the student teacher team.

Design:

During the first half of the student teaching experience, each student teacher will meet for development seminars with a team of student teachers and the supervisor-practicum leaders.

In all other ways, university supervision will be conducted in the classroom and follow existing guidelines.

Student teachers and supervisors will meet for one half day at the culmination of the experience for reflection upon practice, professional outcomes, and future plans.

Assessment:

The assessment components of the program have included a Likert scale survey and an open response questionnaire completed by student teachers, cooperating teachers, administrators, and university supervisors; student teacher journals; and a group reflection of the semester through the seven semesters the program has been in place. Results have led to adjustments in the program such as modifications of the content and scheduling of seminars, the requirements of the experiences, and additional opportunities for communication among student teachers, supervisors and cooperating teachers. The strongest, consistent finding over this period by all respondents has been the positive ratings given to the element of collaborative inquiry, i.e. the interdisciplinary teaming of student teachers with working teams of

middle level faculty. This finding is consistent with recent research that has shown that interdisciplinary team organization with student teachers is beneficial to members of the teaching team and their students (Strahan, Bowles, Richardson, & Hanawald, 1997; Kuhns, Hoover, & Leese, 1997).

Assessment of the University Field Director

Over the past several years, our perceptions of field experiences for the preservice teachers have changed from a single experience, student teaching, to a multifaceted approach. Now it is the norm for preservice teachers to be involved in experiences in basic education from their freshman through their senior years. The job of the Field Experience Director has changed from one that only deals with placing students in a single experience to one that involves many experiences and serves many publics.

While it is often easy for the Field Experience Director to be distracted by the myraid of assignments that must be made, the capstone experience, student teaching, must remain the primary focus. Student teaching is that place where students tie classroom theory and early field experience knowledge with the practice in schools.

The literature has been quite consistent in its assertion that the primary forces in the transition from preservice teacher to teacher are the cooperating teacher and the school setting. The establishment of the PDP model for the secondary middle school students enables Millersville University to take advantage of the many positive aspects of the change from a junior high school to a middle school and enables the

public school sector to expose the preservice teacher to a true middle school setting.

From a Field Experience Director's perspective, how are we doing? One of the first questions that University personnel ask relates to the availability and ease of placement for teams of student teachers. School personnel, with few exceptions, have enthusiastically supported the PDP model. Principals and team leaders are excited about hosting and supervising a team of student teachers who will be indoctrinated with the middle school philosophy. With these enthusiastic acceptances, the placement of student teaching teams has generally not been difficult, except for the two obstacles noted below.

Another positive aspect of the program, from a Field Experience Director's perspective, is the perception from the students in the program that they have a greater feeling of collegiality with the other school professionals and student teachers than those in a non PDP setting. Student teachers who are placed on teams feel that they have more opportunities to interact with school personnel and each other. The cooperating teachers report more interactions with other student teachers on their team. This mutual feeling of increased collegiality facilitates the placement of these teams.

We have, however, encountered two obstacles with our placements. One obstacle has been a new teacher on a team. One requirement for being a cooperating teacher is "three years of teaching experience". Teams are often rearranged to provide appropriate mentoring for newly hired teachers. This rearrangement may produce teams with several new teachers and makes the placement of an entire team

impossible.

Another difficulty that we have encountered is the perception by basic education parents and some school administrators that the students on a particular team may have too many student teachers. There is the possibility that at given times, the students are being taught by student teachers in all of their subjects. We have been able to minimize these obstacles by placing modified teams (less than four student teachers on a team) in a school. Usually this experience removes the concern about the quality of education being received by the students from a student teaching team.

Overall, the experiences gained through PDP have been very positive, from the student teacher, cooperating teacher, and University perspective. The establishment of the Professional Development Practicum has not had any adverse effects on the placement of student teachers or on their experience. On the contrary, the PDP has facilitated both our placements and the transition from student teacher to beginning teacher. With both student and cooperating teachers voicing a positive experience, the Professional Development Practicum has been a win-win situation.

Study of the Educational Values of PDP Student Teachers

In light of the existing literature on the socialization of student teachers during student teaching, the authors wanted to assess if the program had an impact on the educational values of PDP student teachers especially those related to middle level school reform. The literature on student teaching suggests that the strong influences

of the cooperating teacher and the culture of the school-site often cause students to leave student teaching with more conservative and custodial attitudes (Hoy & Rees, 1977) and less confidence in the general efficacy of teaching (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1990) than they had before entering student teaching. Goodlad (1990) has reported that during the student teaching experience: 1) a student teacher's conceptual connections between the knowledge base of teaching acquired during university preparation and knowledge gained in school-based practice are weakened; and 2) a prospective teacher's predisposition to implement instruction reforms is lessened.

To assess the changes in educational values of student teachers placed in middle level, teamed instruction as compared to those student teachers randomly assigned to non-teamed classrooms in the secondary schools, the authors designed an exploratory, two semester study beginning in Spring 1996. The first study, Study A, conducted in Spring 1996, involved 27 student teachers, 17 in self-contained art education classrooms and 10 in the Professional Development Practicum and teamed, middle level classrooms. The second study, Study B, conducted in Fall 1997, assessed the educational values of 8 non-teamed, randomly selected secondary student teachers and 8 student teachers in the Professional Development Practicum and in teamed middle schools. Student teachers completed the Val-Ed instrument at the beginning and end of the 14 week student teaching semester. Cooperating teachers also completed the instrument in the beginning of the semester to determine the effect of cooperating teachers' educational value on those of the student teachers. This element was added to control for the strong influence of the cooperating teacher

as reported in the literature. The response rate for Study A was 100%; for Study B, 100% completion for the student teachers, 80% completion for the cooperating teachers.

We hypothesized that those student teachers participating in the Professional Development Practicum would be more predisposed to retain or increase educational values aligned with middle school philosophy and reforms as stated in the "Turning Points" recommendations adopted by the National Middle School Association (see Appendix 1) than those student teachers in non-teamed secondary schools that were not designated as middle schools. We hypothesized that the mean scores for the experimental, middle level group would increase as compared to the mean scores of the secondary education students. We also hypothesized that the cooperating teachers in the respective groups would also affect the educational values of the student teachers and to control for this effect, we also assessed their educational values.

The instrument used in the study was the VAL-ED scale version of the of the FIRO Awareness Scales. It is a scale designed to assess educational values regarding the "shoulds" of relationships in a school setting among child, teacher, administrator, and community. These relationships are measured in the areas of inclusion, control, and affection. Two scales not based on FIRO Theory were included in the Val-Ed and relate to 1) the social importance of education and 2) the purpose of school - whether it is to develop the child's whole personality or just his/her mind. This instrument was chosen because of its rating as both a valid and reliable instrument; the large sample

size of its normative population; its use with a wide range or respondents including students, teachers, administrators, and community members; and because of the correspondence of the values measured on the scale with those middle level practices recommended in the "Turning Points" recommendations.

The following are the twelve values measured by the instrument, their meaning, and the meaning of the score. Scale scores indicate the degree of agreement with the scale name: 9 means agreement, 0 means disagreement.

I. **Importance (TSI)** - This scale indicates whether school is a place of learning (high score) or is a preparation for employment.

II. **Mind (ACI)** - A low scorer supports the holistic, affective approach to learning whereas a high scorer indicates preference for more traditional training of the mind.

III. **Teacher-Student Control (TSC)** - High score indicates strong teacher control and discipline whereas a low score indicates the respondent feels control by the teacher is not important.

IV. **Teacher-Student Affection (TSA)**- A low score means teachers should maintain a business-like approach with students; a high score indicates that teachers should express their feelings to students.

V. **Administrator-Teacher: Inclusion (ATI)** - This scale is related to the philosophy of participative democracy. A high score indicates that teachers should be involved in administrative decision making; a low score indicates that administrators are the people most capable administering and are under no obligation to include teachers in decision making.

VI. **Administrator-Teacher: Control (ATC)** - A high score indicates the value that administrators are the leaders of the school and that they should control and regulate what a teacher teaches and how the teacher behaves personally; a low score means that you feel that teachers are free to teach what they like and behave as they wish once they become teachers.

VII. **Administrator-Teacher Affection (ATA)** - Low scores value maintaining separation and do not believe administrators should become personally involved with teachers; high scorers feel administrators and teachers should be able to pursue whatever personal relations they wish.

VIII. **Teacher-Community: Inclusion (TCI)** - A low score indicates that teachers are not obligated to become part of the community socially; a high score indicates that it is important for a teacher to participate in

community activities.

IX. **Teacher-Community: Control (TCC)** - A high score indicates that teachers should exhibit, even in their personal life, behavior in keeping with dominant community values; a low score indicates that while teachers are obligated to be good teachers, what they do personally is their own business.

X. **Teacher-Community Affection (TCA)** - A high score indicates that teachers should be an integral part of community and live their personal lives in the community; a low score indicates that teachers' personal life should be separate from the community.

XI. **Administrator-Community: Control (ACC)** - A high score indicates that you feel the administrator should follow the wishes of the community in policy making; a low score indicates that the administrators should use their own expertise to decide school policy.

XII. **Administrator-Community: Affection (ACA)** - A high score indicates you look on administrators as community members, professionally and socially. A low score indicates that the administrator is under no obligation to live personal lives in the community.

Findings:

The authors caution the reader that the sample size of both studies was small. Only a limited number of student teachers are able to participate in the PDP each semester. This number is limited primarily by the number of middle schools that are willing to have their own students have a team of student teachers for all of their basic subject areas.

A series of statistical analyses was performed to analyze the data and test the hypotheses. To determine the correlations of the pretest and post test scores of each group of student teachers with the scores of the respective group of cooperating teachers, Pearson Correlation Coefficients were calculated for each of the 12 scales listed above. An analysis of variance procedure (Bonferroni T test) was calculated for each variable at the .05 level of significance. In both Study A and B, the significance

of the effect of the educational values of the cooperating teachers was limited. This contrasts sharply with the much of the existing research on the influence of the cooperating teacher on the attitudes of student teacher.

In Study A, only one variable, TSA - Teacher-Student Affection showed a level of significance for a correlation between the values of the cooperating teachers and student teachers. In each group of student teachers, there was a significant decrease in the scores for items which assessed whether teachers should be personally friendly and warm toward students.

In Study B - control group, two variables were significant, the TCI - Teacher-Community Inclusion and the TCA - Teacher - Community Affection. For the first variable TCI where a high score indicates that teachers should participate in community activities and be encouraged to do so by community members, student teacher post scores indicated a signficant negative correlation with those scores of their cooperating teachers. Likewise, for TCA where a high score indicates that teachers and people in the community should be personally friendly with each other, post scores of the student teachers showed a significant negative correlation with those expressd by their cooperating teachers.

In Study B, experimental PDP group, there were no significant changes from pre to post test when correlated with the scores of their cooperating teachers.

A comparison of the mean scores for the variables for each of the four groups tested does not show sizable increases or decreases from the pre test to the post test except for one variable. In Study A, art education teachers showed much higher post

scores for TSI where a high score indicates that education is valuable for itself beyond the its occupational advantages. In an examination of the trendlines of scores for all four groups, some interesting patterns of values for all student teachers surface. In all four groups, the scores for TSC -Teacher Student Control where a high scores indicates beliefs that a teacher should regulate completely classroom lessons and activities increased, supporting existing research that student teachers become more custodial and controlling through the student teaching experience. However, for Teacher Student Affection, all four groups maintained a higher than mid-point score. All four groups scored low on ATC - Adminstrator Teacher Control indicating that adminstrators should control the activities of teachers and that teachers should not be free to teach what they like. The range of scores was from 2.66 to 3.75. Cooperating teachers also had the lowest scores on this variable, ranging from 2.0 to 3.1. This compares with the normed population's mean of 4.82. For one variable, ATI - Administrator-Teacher-Inclusion, all four groups and the cooperating teachers had higher mean scores than the normed population. The mean for the normed population was 4.32 whereas the range of means for the populations of the study were from 5.55 to 7.2, indicating that all these groups supported a much higher involvement of teachers in administrative decisions.

Discussion:

The analysis of the data in this study does not support the authors' hypotheses; rather the null hypothesis was confirmed for the main hypothesis of the study: The

middle level program had no significant impact on the educational values of PDP student teachers when compared to those values of art education student teachers or randomly selected secondary education student teachers. Values regarding student, teacher, administrator, and community behaviors and interactions differed among groups but not significantly. Surprisingly, the effect of the cooperating teachers' educational values on student teachers' values also appeared to be minimal in the study. Studies such as Hoy and Woolfolk have found that "student teachers became significantly more custodial in pupil-control orientation as well as more controlling in their orientation toward problem solving (1990, p. 279). This study does not dispute these findings but calls into question whether their values regarding control, affection, and interaction are changed significantly during the student teaching experience and calls into question the influence of the cooperating teacher on the changes that do occur. While the PDP student teachers affirmed the teaming and instructional aspects of the program in open-ended or Likert scale assessments of the programs, these factors also do not appear to have a significant impact on the values of these student teachers. The overall changes for almost all variables during the student teaching experience are not substantial.

Although the data may not be signficant for what it found, it may be significant in what it did not find. The educational values of student teachers did not change significantly during the period from when they began student teaching until they finished student teaching. Also, cooperating teachers and other factors had minimal impact on what changes, if any, occurred in the educational values of the student

teachers. Assessments used by researchers such as Hoy and Woolfolk measure predispositions for behaviors in the classroom and beliefs regarding efficacy in the classroom whereas the Val-Ed measures attitudes and values that guide these behaviors.

The authors offer some possible explanations for these findings:

1) Student teachers in the study came primarily from homogenous, suburban school districts to Millersville University, a regional, homogenous state university. As a result of the homogeneity of the population, it is possible that these student teachers begin and end student teaching with very similar educational values when compared to each other. It is also likely that these values are very similar to the teachers they had in their own schooling and to those teachers in the suburban, homogenous schools where they do their practice teaching. In a comparison with the Val-Ed population (N= 5,847), the standard deviations among the four student teacher groups studied for the 12 variables were consistently lower than that reported for the Val-Ed normed population. Although the standard deviations of the scores of the student teachers were greater than the standard deviations for their cooperating teachers, those of the cooperating teachers were also smaller than those of the normed Val-Ed population. In this sense, their student teaching experiences work to affirm their existing educational values with some slight modifications. Through the process of their socialization during student teaching, the student teachers regress toward the norms of their cooperating teachers who already hold similar educational values.

The findings of study support Lortie's conclusions (1975):

1) Lortie claims that reruitment into teaching fosters a conservative outlook since teaching appeals strongly to young people who are favorably disposed toward the existing system of schools, and not commonly to those who want to alter the nature and direction of school practices (p. 54). Our student teachers enter teaching with educational values that have been shaped by their own experience and success within the systems from which they graduated high school. They generally "fit the mold" of the educational values of the teachers they had in their own schooling.

2) Prospective teachers are gradually shaped into this mold through what Lortie calls an "apprenticeship of observation." Those students who enter student teaching have had sixteen continuous years of contact with teachers and professors in this apprenticeship of observation. Lortie also claims that in this apprenticeship, "what students learn about teaching, then, is intuitive and imitative rather than explicit and analytical. . . . which, being generalized across individuals, becomes tradition." (pp. 62-63). Our findings support Lortie's work that during the process of teacher education courses and student teaching these intuitive and imitative learnings are changed into explicit and possibly, analytical behaviors. Teacher education courses, most likely, provide the discourse and rationale for student teacher behaviors in preservice field experiences and student teaching. These experiences in the field serve to define the outline of the shape of the mold of educational values that had begun long before student teaching begins. In effect, teacher education courses or for that matter, student teaching has minimal impact on the educational values of the

students who enter our programs. Years of acculturation in schooling has already shaped the values of those who choose to teach and those who do not, have already realized that schools are not the places where they want to be.

MEAN SCORES FOR VAL-ED VARIABLES

STUDY A

	Art Education		N=17	Middle School		N=10
	Pre	Post	Diff.	Pre	Post	Diff.
TSI	3.000000	6.705882	3.705882	5.400000	4.900000	-0.500000
ACI	2.823529	3.000000	0.176471	2.100000	3.400000	1.300000
TSC	4.941176	5.235294	0.294118	3.200000	5.000000	1.800000
TSA	6.058821	5.647058	-0.411763	6.600000	5.400000	-1.200000
ATI	5.823529	6.117647	0.294118	4.300000	6.100000	1.800000
ATC	2.705882	2.911760	0.205878	3.100000	3.000000	-0.100000
ATA	5.000000	4.823529	-0.176471	5.700000	6.000000	0.300000
TCI	5.058823	5.294117	0.235294	6.800000	5.500000	-1.300000
TCC	3.823529	3.941176	0.117647	4.600000	4.900000	0.300000
TCA	4.588235	4.294117	-0.294118	5.200000	5.000000	-0.200000
ACC	5.941176	5.588235	-0.352941	5.700000	6.300000	0.600000
ACA	4.294117	4.352941	0.058824	5.500000	4.900000	-0.600000

STUDY B

	Secondary Education		N=8	Middle School		N=8
	Pre	Post	Diff.	Pre	Post	Diff.
TSI	3.333333	3.166667	-0.166666	3.750000	3.875000	0.125000
ACI	4.166667	3.333333	-0.833334	3.750000	3.875000	0.125000
TSC	4.333333	5.000000	0.666667	5.625000	5.250000	-0.375000
TSA	5.666667	4.833333	-0.833334	5.375000	5.625000	0.250000
ATI	6.000000	6.333333	0.333333	5.750000	5.620000	-0.130000
ATC	3.333333	2.666667	-0.666666	3.625000	3.750000	0.125000
ATA	5.500000	4.833333	-0.666667	5.625000	6.125000	0.500000
TCI	5.000000	5.666667	0.666667	6.125000	6.500000	0.375000
TCC	4.833333	4.500000	-0.333333	3.750000	3.875000	0.125000
TCA	5.166667	5.500000	0.333333	5.125000	5.250000	0.125000
ACC	5.833333	6.500000	0.666667	5.750000	3.875000	-1.875000
ACA	4.500000	4.500000	0.000000	4.375000	5.000000	0.625000

Recommendations of The Carnegie Council of Adolescent Development Task Force on Education of Young Adolescents

Create small communities for learning, where stable, close, mutually respectful relationships with adults and peers are considered fundamental for intellectual development and personal growth.

Teach a core academic program that results in students who are literate, including in the humanities, social, and physical sciences, and who know how to think critically, lead a healthy life, behave ethically, and assume the responsibilities of citizenship in a pluralistic society.

Ensure success for all students through elimination of tracking by achievement level and promotion of cooperative learning, flexibility in arranging instructional time, and adequate resources for teachers.

Empower teachers and administrators to make decisions about the experiences of middle grad students through creative control by school staff over the instructional program linked to greater responsibility for each student's performance.

Staff middle grade schools with teachers who are expert at teaching young adolescents and who have been specially prepared for assignment to the middle grades.

Improve academic performance through fostering the health and fitness of young adolescents by providing a health coordinator in every middle grade school, access to health care and counseling services, and a health-promoting school environment.

Reengage families in the education of young adolescents by giving families meaningful roles in school governance, communicating with families effectively, and offering families opportunities to support the learning process at home.

Connect schools with communities by identifying opportunities for youth service in the community, establishing partnerships and collaborations to ensure students' access to health and social services, and using community resources to enrich the instructional program.

Adapted from Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21st Century, a report prepared by the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development's Task Force on Education of Young Adolescents. The Carnegie Council is a program of Carnegie Corporation of New York.

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